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STORY OF A CANNONEER

Reminiscences of a Detached Volunteer in a Regular Battery.

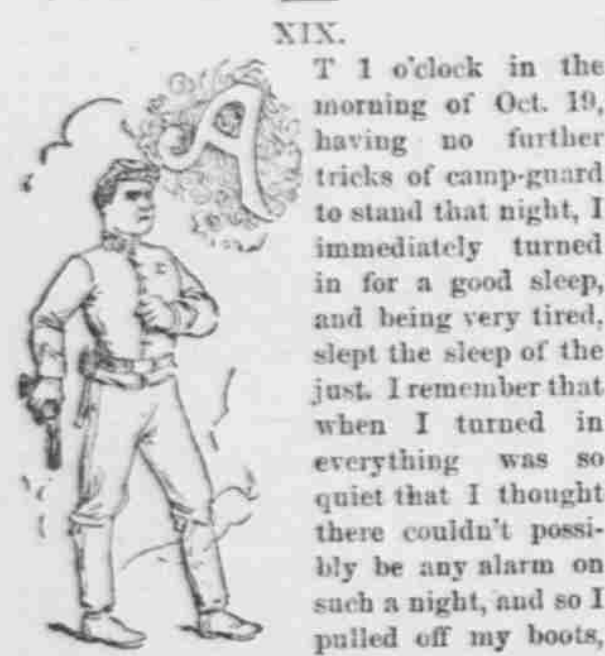
BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK.

Hand-to-hand Fighting With Revolvers and Rammers.

PLUCKY VERMONTERS.

Getty's Division Fought Early Almost Single-handed.

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T I o'clock in the morning of Oct. 19, having no further tricks of camp-guard to stand that night, I immediately turned in for a good sleep, and being very tired, slept the sleep of the just. I remember that when I turned in everything was so quiet that I thought there couldn't possibly be any alarm on such a night, and so I pulled off my boots, jacket and trousers, and crawled into my warm double blankets, in a sense of perfect security. Falling asleep almost instantly, I realized nothing until I felt a rude shake and heard Pat's voice, "Turn out, quick! We're attacked!" and the shrill blast of our bugles and the shouts of our officers, and the rattle of the harness, and, above all, the crash, crash, of rapid volleys up in front—all of which, in the fog and darkness, made a perfect pandemonium. But I was "too old a Regular" to be "rattled" by a little thing like that, and, as crawling out in the tent just as it was—blankets, haversacks, canteen, etc., taking nothing with me but my revolver-belt, which I buckled on as I ran to the post. I found I was tardy at the gun, as all the other fellows had slept with everything on but their boots. The teams had been hooked up and they were beginning to move off with the section when I reached our gun. The sound of battle in front rose heavier, and heavier through the fog. As we moved to take position, which was not more than 100 yards from our camp, we saw the Vermonters on our left and Wheaton's old Brigade (then commanded by Col. Warner) on our right—we were in the interval between them—rapidly deploying through the fog and gloom. They moved out in front of us and crossed the brook, we remaining on the knoll. It was now growing lighter, but the fog still hung low and not much could be seen; but a great deal could be heard, and it kept getting louder and coming closer—yells, volleys, occasional cannon-shots, etc. By this time it may have been between 6 and 7 a. m. The fog was beginning to "scale up" where we were, and in a few minutes we could see quite a distance up the pike, perhaps 40 rods;—and could distinguish objects as far as the grove west of the pike. And just at this moment the wreck here in sight, everywhere, streaming out of the fog came the disordered masses of all arms, in indistinguishable confusion, of Crook's and Emory's commands, with the remnants of their trains and artillery, and all the imaginable debris of a routed camp surging down the pike and through the fields west of it, in wreck and ruin that beggars language to describe!

At this point I want to say that while, in order to be accurate, it is necessary to state that the troops of Thorburn's Division, with their trains and all the other wreck of their routed camp, I do not blame the men. That division embraced Massachusetts, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York (heavy artillery) and West Virginia troops. I do not recollect the regiments, but I know that they were all good troops. They had forced the ford at Snicker's Ferry the 15th of August, where they had to wade to their arms up the enemy's fire of infantry and artillery, and had then routed him from his position. At the Openpan, Sept. 19, they had made no uncertain battle. At Fisher's Hill, Sept. 22, they had made a detour over a mountain, and had struck the enemy in his flank at a decisive moment, and to all intents and purposes had decided the battle.

Of course it would be a mockery of history to deny that these troops were routed. But they had been surprised in their tents. Many of them had no other than their underclothes. Soldiers can never be to blame for such a misfortune as that. I do not pretend to say whose fault it was that the men of Thorburn's Division were surprised in their tents before daylight. If it was Thorburn's fault, he expiated it with his life, and that settles his part of the account, so far as I am concerned. But I am sure that the enemy could never have routed those men in that fashion if they had had a ghost of a chance to form up to battle. With this explanation I will proceed.

The enemy was not far behind them, though not as close to their heels as they should have been; for very much doubt whether even the Sixth Corps could have stood its ground had the rebels struck us while that wild mob was surging over and through our ranks. We were ordered to open on the enemy with case-shot at once, but could not do so for a few minutes owing to the jam of the wagons in our front; so

that when we did open the enemy was pretty close to us. The rebel infantry began firing as they came up, and Lieut. Fred Robinson, who commanded the left section, was severely wounded and had to leave the field. At the same time our infantry on the left of the battery was compelled to refuse its left flank to face toward the pike, and in doing so left the battery without support on either flank. Capt. McKnight—who, I believe, was Acting Chief, or doing some other staff duty that day, but happened to be on our line at that moment—now ordered us to limber to the rear and take position on the high knoll or small hill half a mile or so to the north. There was no use to try to hold that position where we were, with the unsupported battery alone, as the other batteries—Stevens', Adams', and Van Eiten's—to the right had already begun to retire with Wheaton's (First) Division. There was a brushy little ravine close



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to our left flank, where a little rill flowed into Meadow Brook, and the enemy's skirmishers swarmed into this and, as we were limbering up, fired a volley which downed every driver and team on No. 2 gun of the left section, and they also reached far enough around our left flank to get in on our rear and cripple two of the caisson teams, so that we had to abandon that gun and the two caissons of the left section. But we got off with the other five guns and four caissons, and fell rapidly back to the point indicated, going in battery again on the west side of Meadow Brook opposite Middletown village or hamlet, a little in front and to the right of the old burying-ground, that was on the top of the knoll. We lost in this first encounter one officer and I suppose as many as 10 men, together with one gun, two caissons, and probably 15 or 18 horses.

OUR INFANTRY NOW RAPIDLY FORMED on the slopes of the knoll or hill, occupying the fences and such other cover as the ground afforded, we being in the interval between Grant's and Bidwell's Brigades. The enemy himself appeared to be in a good deal of confusion, and took some time to rally—perhaps half an hour—on the ground which we had occupied at first. There was still considerable fog on the lower ground. Immediately on the left flank of the battery in this new position was another little ravine, with a tumble-down stone wall running along the bank next to us, and I know it struck me at the time that this exposed



REBEL OFFICER WHEN EARLY STRUCK THE SIXTH CORPS.

us to an attack similar to the one that had cost us a gun and several men in the first position. To the right, and running along the side of the hill diagonally to our line, was another wall, which some part of the Vermonters had seized. Beyond that our new line bent round the curve of the hill to the westward of the Cemetery, so that I could not see what our troops were doing over there. To the left I could see Bidwell's men forming along the bank of the brook, but I noticed they did not connect with the Vermonters, so that there was a gap of about 20 rods, or at least several battery fronts in width, which the battery was plainly expected to hold. So we loaded caisson double, and braced ourselves for business of a pressing nature. I recollect at this moment noticing Lieut. Baldwin, who was on foot, and had two revolvers in his belt, pull one of them out of his holster and shove it down into his boot-leg, which example was of us followed. This proved to be prophetic of the sort of circus that was coming. Meantime the wreck of Crook's and Emory's commands had cleared our front, most of it surging off through the fields toward the right of the Sixth Corps, where Ricketts's Division was.

And now the enemy, having reformed his line, came on again with loud yells. The moment they started we opened on them at point-blank, and doing some fine execution, but they wouldn't stop. Being Acting-Gunner since leaving the first position, I kept my muzzle down, so that every round "threw the dirt in their faces"; but there was no stopping them. On they came, swinging their left around to take in reverse the short piece of stone wall that the advanced line of the Vermonters held, and in doing so the musketry of their left began to enfilade our battery-front. Our right and center sec-

tions stood their ground well, and the right gun was slewed round to the right to meet this flank attack. But Lieut. Robinson, of our left section, had been already shot, and one of his guns had been abandoned, as before-mentioned, in our first position, so that section was wholly demoralized, and all its remaining men were either shot or flinched from their gun, which was exposed to a fire from the ravine before described. The enemy was now so near that we "could see the whites of his eyes."

AND THING AS HE CAME ON. I should explain here that they were coming on in two lines; the first rather heavy skirmish-line, about 10 to 20 rods in advance of their main line, and they were also reaching round our left flank from the other side of the brook. But it was their front or skirmish-line that struck us. There were probably about 75 or 80 of them that actually struck, and the row was all over before the main line got up. I could not believe that they were actually going to close with us until I saw the men on the



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remaining gun of our left section flinch from it and run toward the old graveyard wall. Their front line was not in any kind of order, but there was a look of confusion, and I distinctly heard him shout, "Rally on the battery! Rally on the battery!" Our division and the right section stood firm. Pat drove his last double caisson where their leading men were within 40 feet of him, and I yanked the lanyard right in their teeth, almost before he was clear of the muzzle; but they were right on top of us, and they opened out, so that the charge did not hit any of them, as I could see, and in a second they were amongst us. It was now man to man, hand to hand, with bayonet and musket-butt on their sides and revolvers, rammer-jacks and hand-spikes on ours! There was no room for doubt as to the quality of McKnight's battery then.

But just at this supreme moment their advance line reeled and wavered, 80 or 100 of the Vermonters rallied on our flank, and began to rake our battery front with their musketry, and Lieut. Baldwin desperately attempted to limber the remaining guns to the rear. As the Vermonters "wheeled in" for this purpose they got a fierce volley from the enemy's main line, that had halted about 200 feet from us, and nearly every driver and horse in the five teams fell. This volley killed Baldwin, killed one No. 5—Olafsen, or Olesen, a Danish boy, who was shot through the head, and fell against us, and the blood that spouted from his temple flew all over my left sleeve and side, staining my uniform from the elbow to the knee, and drenching everybody in the section, except Kennedy and one of two of our Cannoneers on No. 1, and Pat, Ned and me on No. 2. Meantime the Vermonters, who had been driven from their stone wall, or rather flanked out of its cover, kept rallying on our right as they came back, and raking our battery front with a fire that had become more and more deadly. The advanced skirmish-line of the rebels was now disposed of, and as every one of our commissioned officers were gone, Sergt. Yoder and the 16 or 17 of us that were left, some Cannoneers who had escaped the battery of the section before, some drivers who had extricated themselves out from under their fallen teams, together with Sergt. Burkhardt and Corp'l Nore, Kennedy and Beck, succeeded, with the help of some of the infantry, in dragging off two guns—No. 1 of the right and No. 1 of the center sections—by hand with prolonged ropes.

As we began to move off with these two guns we could see in the smoke and yet remaining fog THE UNCONQUERABLE VERMONTERS still rallying to cover us, and as the enemy's main line came on again the enemy charged with bayonet and musket-butt, right among the guns that we had abandoned.

We had not gone back more than 40 or 50 yards when we found one of our drivers with two horses and another with four that had escaped the wreck, and to these we at once limbered the two guns with the prolongs, and so dragged them back some distance—at least out of reach of the rebel bayonets! We were now moving along on the west bank of the brook in a sort of beaten track that had evidently been made by farm wagons in the peaceful days gone by. We continued to retire for some minutes, until we came to a little ravine formed by a small rill that runs into Meadow Brook from the west, and here we found, under cover of the narrow bed of our caissons that had escaped the wreck in our first position. Just at this moment the enemy began to swarm up from across the brook on the flank of the Vermonters and Bidwell's Brigade, who were still in our front, fighting as no other infantry ever fought, and threatened to take them in reverse. We instantly opened with our two guns on this flank column, taking them en echelon with double canister, as they swung around on the other bank of the brook, and we made their leading line recoil back to the pike and take shelter among the fences and houses of the little hamlet of Middletown.

There has never been a doubt in my mind but that the Vermonters, Bidwell's and Wheaton's old Brigades, who were now there, would have held that second position in the First Division of the Sixth Corps on their right.

HAD NOT GIVEN GROUND. expiring their right flank. These brigades composed Getty's Second Division, Sixth Corps. The First, known as Frank Wheaton's old Brigade, was composed of the 62d N. Y. and the 93d, 96th and 129th Pa., and was then commanded by Col. Warner. The Second Brigade, known as the "Old Original Vermont Brigade" (sometimes nick-named by the other troops "Eliza Allen's Guards"), was made up of the 1st H. A., 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th Vt. Now, this particular time was 9 or 9 o'clock in the morning. The wreck of the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps was still at its worst. The First Division of the Sixth Corps was going to the rear, and the Second Brigade, commanded by Col. Warner, was retreating on the left of the Vermonters, was swung back almost at right angles to the line of the Vermonters, to meet the flank attack now being developed from the rear. The Second Brigade, of Getty's Division, composed of the remnants of six regiments, none of which were more than 180 strong—so that the brigade was hardly equal to a full regiment—this brigade, on the left of the Vermonters, was swung back almost at right angles to the line of the Vermonters, to meet the flank attack now being developed from the rear. The Second Brigade, of Getty's Division, composed of the remnants of six regiments, none of which were more than 180 strong—so that the brigade was hardly equal to a full regiment—this brigade, on the left of the Vermonters, was swung back almost at right angles to the line of the Vermonters, to meet the flank attack now being developed from the rear.

terly being formed at first in the left salient point of it, and after we were wrecked, as described, forming again with two guns a little in rear of Bidwell's flank.

This was what we always termed "the second position" of our division, and it was almost exactly opposite—that is, just across Meadow Brook—from Middletown hamlet, and we held it for more than an hour, unsupported by any other troops, except Stevens's 5th Me. battery, with the exultant enemy closing in on us from three sides. As this was by great odds the closest and most desperate fighting that I saw during the whole war, and as the behavior of our infantry on that occasion filled me with unspeakable admiration, I have taken much pains to ascertain, by subsequent investigation, the exact circumstances under which that particular part of the battle was fought. The strength of our division was as follows: Warner's Brigade, 1,300; the Vermont Brigade, 1,350; Bidwell's, 1,050; or 3,700 muskets in the whole division. Its artillery was only the five guns of our battery in line, though, as shown on the diagram, the inevitable Stevens with his 5th Me. battery, having already taken up his high knoll opposite Warner's flank, and was literally deluging the enemy on that side with his canister. We had three guns playing with

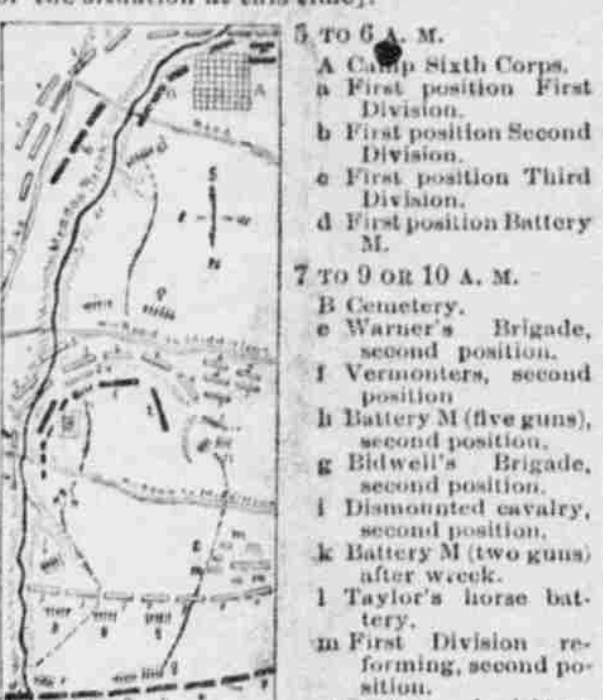


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double canister on the troops coming down on our front, and the other two wheeled to the left, working the enemy across the ravine. The official maps and records show that the force attacking us at this time was as follows: In front, attacking the Vermonters, Ramsey's Division, 2,500; on our left, assaulting Bidwell, Percott's Division, 1,800 or 2,000; on our right, pressing and flanking Warner, Kershaw's Division, about 2,000; or nearly 7,000 muskets in all, with 16 guns. At this time, from 8 o'clock in the morning till past 10 we received no help or support from any other troops of the army, except Stevens's battery and two or three small regiments of dismounted cavalry which Merritt had formed along the brook to prolong the fight. To all intents and purposes, therefore,

GETTY'S DIVISION, SINGLE-HANDED.

was standing off three of Early's Divisions, and was fighting odds of at least two to one. This state of things seldom occurred, as our forces usually outnumbered the rebels. But in this particular and most critical part of Cedar Creek the odds were largely against us. It is in this stand made by Getty's Division to which Early refers in his report, when he says: "I found the rebels in the morning at the ridge west of the pike and offering determined resistance. Gen. Ramseur and Gen. Pegram had asked for assistance, stating that they were unable to force this line. It had completely arrested our progress, and we were unable to advance. The First Division (Wheaton's) was about half a mile to the right-rank of Warner, reforming, it having been somewhat shattered in the first onset, and the Third Division (Hickett's) was clear over to the right, a mile away, trying to cover the rallying of the Nineteenth Corps. [The following diagram will give an approximate idea of the situation at this time:]



1. Enemy, first attack.
2. Pegram attacking Bidwell.
3. First position Second Division.
4. Ramseur attacking Vermonters.
5. Kershaw attacking Warner.
6. Bidwell's position, second position.
7. Bidwell's position, second position.
8. Bidwell's position, second position.
9. Bidwell's position, second position.
10. Bidwell's position, second position.
11. Bidwell's position, second position.
12. Bidwell's position, second position.
13. Bidwell's position, second position.
14. Bidwell's position, second position.
15. Bidwell's position, second position.
16. Bidwell's position, second position.
17. Bidwell's position, second position.
18. Bidwell's position, second position.
19. Bidwell's position, second position.
20. Bidwell's position, second position.

So Getty's Division was absolutely going it alone. For more than an hour this desperate and unequal struggle raged along the banks of the ravine and among the trees and fences of the fields west of Middletown with ferocity that I never saw paralleled. But it could not last. The heroic Bidwell fell in the effort to storm the title that surged in on him from the direction of the pike; even Warner, "Die-hards," as we used to call them, gave ground at last, and that left the Vermonters with both flanks exposed. The whole division then (between 9 and 10 o'clock) began to retire. There was no breaking and no confusion. If every man of them had been a Bengal tiger fighting for life in his native jungle, they could not have retreated more skillfully and with more destruction about them as they fell back. They retired in two lines, one falling back through the other, in perfect order, and the rebels did not follow them very closely either. As this retrograde movement began, Gen. Lewis Grant—then in command of the division—sent an Aid to order us out of that and over the little ravine and to fall back till further orders. So with our two guns and one caisson and perhaps 22 or 24 men—several having rejoined us from the wreck—we retired with the prolongs fixed, and hauled our crippled guns along the west bank of the brook until we got on a high knoll about three-quarters of a mile from Middletown, where, as the pursuit had ceased and we saw the Vermonters and Wheaton's Brigade halting in our front, we fired again, limbered and reformed section. We did not retreat any further. Whether the enemy had exhausted himself, or whether he was daunted by the front position that we had taken, or whether the little band of the Vermonters showed him there, I don't know, but he recoiled finally and fatally from this last position.

This was about three-fourths of a mile below ally to the stand made by Old Greenleaf Stevens and his IMMORTAL 5TH ME. BATTERY, already mentioned. The fact that Stevens's boys had been comrades with the old battery when in the First Corps, and I knew many of them personally, has nothing to do with this account. I have already given a full and complete account of the battle at the time when Getty's Division was "going it alone" in its second position. Stevens, who had apparently been retiring in the interval between the right of Getty's and the left of Wheaton, formed his battery on the knoll opposite the right flank of Warner's Brigade, and opened a tremendous fire of canister on that part of the enemy's line which was advancing to envelop Warner. These I understand from the histories, must have been Kershaw's troops; but there was another rebel division coming up still beyond Kershaw over ground vacated by our First Division. This, according to Early's account, was Gordon's Division, and one or more brigades of it started to charge Stevens's battery. According to the best information I could get, immediately after the battle or since, there was no industry of the First Division within supporting distance of Stevens at that moment, as that division was then reforming at from one-third to one-half a mile in his rear. But he stood his ground and repulsed the charge of Gordon's troops, who did not get more than half-way up the activity of the knoll he was holding, and who, as I have said, were actually "recoiling in considerable confusion." It is true that Capt. Stevens subsequently retired from this knoll, in order to take position in the third and final line formed by the Sixth Corps that day, and from this position he, with the other batteries before mentioned—Adams and Van Eiten—engaged the rebel artillery about 3 p. m. in the sharp duel with case-shot that formed the grand finale of the action, and along the line. But I feel justified in saying that Stevens took up his second position without infantry support, held it against a heavy infantry charge, which he repulsed unaided, besides contributing materially to the stand made by Getty's Division in that position. It is hardly necessary to add that this was one of the most brilliant artillery exploits of the war.

After we had halted in our second position we got a chance to compare notes. Hunt and I of our gun detachment were safe. Callahan had stuck to the gun, despite his torn and bloody hip, until the excitement began to abate; but then his wound began to ache and get stiff, and as we saw Dr. Wood's field-hospital flag on the other side of Meadow Brook, some distance down the pike, Ned hobbled over there, and we did not see him again for some weeks. Tom D—y was "missing." He turned up the next day, safe and sound.

—that is, north of Middletown village. The place where we halted was at the point where Meadow Brook comes nearest to the line of the pike, and the time was near noon. This was the end of the retrograde movement of the Sixth Corps on any part of its line, and we were put into battery—or rather into section—by Gen. Lewis Grant himself. We opened with canister again in this position, but as the enemy did not come on, we ceased at the third round. In fact, as both guns had been drawing on the caisson that we found in the ravine, as before stated, and no new supply had come up, it is probable that we had little if any more canister left; we having fired, I should say, 60 to 70 rounds per gun during the hour or so that we were holding the position on the knoll to the left and rear of Bidwell's line, and when we drove the enemy's flankers back into Middletown.

While in this position we were organized as a section, all our remaining ammunition was packed in the limbers, and the teams that belonged to the caisson were hooked to the guns, so that we were in pretty good shape for the morning again. This was done by Capt. McKnight, in a brief interval of his staff duty.

At this point I feel that this sketch would be incomplete if I failed to refer more than casually to the stand made by Old Greenleaf Stevens and his IMMORTAL 5TH ME. BATTERY, already mentioned. The fact that Stevens's boys had been comrades with the old battery when in the First Corps, and I knew many of them personally, has nothing to do with this account. I have already given a full and complete account of the battle at the time when Getty's Division was "going it alone" in its second position. Stevens, who had apparently been retiring in the interval between the right of Getty's and the left of Wheaton, formed his battery on the knoll opposite the right flank of Warner's Brigade, and opened a tremendous fire of canister on that part of the enemy's line which was advancing to envelop Warner. These I understand from the histories, must have been Kershaw's troops; but there was another rebel division coming up still beyond Kershaw over ground vacated by our First Division. This, according to Early's account, was Gordon's Division, and one or more brigades of it started to charge Stevens's battery. According to the best information I could get, immediately after the battle or since, there was no industry of the First Division within supporting distance of Stevens at that moment, as that division was then reforming at from one-third to one-half a mile in his rear. But he stood his ground and repulsed the charge of Gordon's troops, who did not get more than half-way up the activity of the knoll he was holding, and who, as I have said, were actually "recoiling in considerable confusion." It is true that Capt. Stevens subsequently retired from this knoll, in order to take position in the third and final line formed by the Sixth Corps that day, and from this position he, with the other batteries before mentioned—Adams and Van Eiten—engaged the rebel artillery about 3 p. m. in the sharp duel with case-shot that formed the grand finale of the action, and along the line. But I feel justified in saying that Stevens took up his second position without infantry support, held it against a heavy infantry charge, which he repulsed unaided, besides contributing materially to the stand made by Getty's Division in that position. It is hardly necessary to add that this was one of the most brilliant artillery exploits of the war.

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WITH A BLOOD-CURDLING STORY

of falling down and feigning death when the rebels ran over us, and then getting up and joining our infantry when they retook the position, going with them in the pursuit and camping with them all night! My recollection is that several lower ejectives were farfully pulled down by Hunt, Kennedy, Yoder and others while Tom was relating this remarkable adventure. The prevailing impression was that he had done some tall walking up the ravine of the Brook, as some others did when we abandoned our second position. Anyhow, Tom's was an extraordinary circumstance, a first-rate Cannoneer, and as his three-years' term was expiring in about a fortnight, no doubt he was excusable for not wanting to take any extraordinary desperate chances. Carefully noting the time of occurrences in our second position, we all agreed that the Gunners and Cannoneers alone had held out, or at least staggered the first line of skirmishers that "rallied on the battery." Yoder was sure that Lieut. Baldwin had killed one of their infantrymen just as he himself was shot down, and Kennedy thought he had got away with another in front of his own gun. Callahan had knocked one down with the handspike after his revolver was disabled or empty. Hunt was bayoneted in his side, and instantly killed his assailant. Sergt. Burkhardt had shot one with his revolver in front of the right section, but had not killed him, as he was found afterward among the disarmed prisoners, with Burk's ball in his groin.

It was agreed on all hands, by the infantry as well as ourselves, that nothing exciting like that had occurred in the previous days, were often run over and captured, but no one had ever known a few Cannoneers to do such execution with their pistols and handspikes as had been done by the rebels on that day; or a remnant of 17 or 18 men, without any commissioned officer left to lead them, to pull two guns out of such a wreck by hand, and then go into battery again and reopen fire with great effect at a short distance to the rear. It was said that Capt. McKnight and Col. Tompkins both made elaborate reports of this affair, in which many of the surviving Cannoneers were highly recommended to the favorable notice of the Commander-in-Chief, and that Yoder was recommended for an immediate promotion. I suppose that these reports were printed in the "Official Records of the Rebellion," when they reach Cedar Creek.

The enemy had got two or three times PRETTY CLOSE TO OUR OWN MUZZLES in Battery B, but this was the only time I ever participated in that sort of circus. So far as the actual hand-to-hand encounter was concerned, that is, from the time the rebel advance-line got in among our guns until we began to drag away the two that we saved,

—I don't suppose it occupied two minutes. But so many things happened in that brief space, and when I saw such an enormous force on my memory, that I could easily fill a hundred pages with a description of it. I suppose the natural impression would be that in such a rough-and-tumble fight, where friend and foe were so close together, and every fellow looking out for himself, the whole affair would present itself to the memory as a blurred, confused picture, of which it would be impossible to recollect the details. But, as a matter of fact, there is no experience in my life of which the details, circumstances and incidents are so clear, or of which my recollection is so perfectly accurate, as our distinctly remembered not only everything that I did, or that was done about me, but every thought that came into my mind, every impulse that I felt, and every muscle that I exerted, from the last time I pulled the lanyard until we began to haul off our guns.

In order to clearly comprehend what such a rough-and-tumble fight means, it is necessary to explain briefly the lay of the ground. We were formed on the crown of a slight knoll, which terminated abruptly on our left flank in the bank of the ravine formed by a little branch of Meadow Brook, and our line gun (the remaining one of our left section) was close to this bank. In our immediate front there was a slight depression, and beyond that another knoll, and along the brow of that knoll, about 20 rods from our position, was a stone wall, or the remains of one, nearly parallel to the line of battle. To our right about 10 rods was another wall, running obliquely to our line and joining the stone wall near the top of the knoll. The Vermonters had rallied behind this last-mentioned piece of wall, and the rebels flanked them out of it by extending their own line at the same time that their skirmish-line attacked our position. The ravine to our left was also full of rebel skirmishers, who had come across the field between Meadow Brook and the pike, from which they had just driven our dismounted cavalry and flankers. I said that the men on the remaining gun of our left section abandoned it as soon as the enemy began to come up out of the ravine. I do not blame them, because they had no chance to defend themselves, as in the smoke and remaining fog, and under the cover of the little ravine, the enemy was right on them and in their rear before they could see him. In fact, we would all have been perfectly justified in abandoning the whole battery, because we could not tell how many of the enemy's infantry there were in the attacking line, and we

ABSOLUTELY NO INFANTRY SUPPORT, except the handful of the 5th and 6th Vt. who had rallied on our right when flanked out of their position behind the stone wall, and there was no organized force of our infantry on the other side of the brook. In fact, in the center sections there were 23 or 24 Cannoneers, four or five non-commissioned officers, and Lieut. Baldwin; and none of us had any arms but our revolvers. I have already given a full and complete account of the battle at the time when Getty's Division was "going it alone" in its second position. Stevens, who had apparently been retiring in the interval between the right of Getty's and the left of Wheaton, formed his battery on the knoll opposite the right flank of Warner's Brigade, and opened a tremendous fire of canister on that part of the enemy's line which was advancing to envelop Warner. These I understand from the histories, must have been Kershaw's troops; but there was another rebel division coming up still beyond Kershaw over ground vacated by our First Division. This, according to Early's account, was Gordon's Division, and one or more brigades of it started to charge Stevens's battery. According to the best information I could get, immediately after the battle or since, there was no industry of the First Division within supporting distance of Stevens at that moment, as that division was then reforming at from one-third to one-half a mile in his rear. But he stood his ground and repulsed the charge of Gordon's troops, who did not get more than half-way up the activity of the knoll he was holding, and who, as I have said, were actually "recoiling in considerable confusion." It is true that Capt. Stevens subsequently retired from this knoll, in order to take position in the third and final line formed by the Sixth Corps that day, and from this position he, with the other batteries before mentioned—Adams and Van Eiten—engaged the rebel artillery about 3 p. m. in the sharp duel with case-shot that formed the grand finale of the action, and along the line. But I feel justified in saying that Stevens took up his second position without infantry support, held it against a heavy infantry charge, which he repulsed unaided, besides contributing materially to the stand made by Getty's Division in that position. It is hardly necessary to add that this was one of the most brilliant artillery exploits of the war.

After we had halted in our second position we got a chance to compare notes. Hunt and I of our gun detachment were safe. Callahan had stuck to the gun, despite his torn and bloody hip, until the excitement began to abate; but then his wound began to ache and get stiff, and as we saw Dr. Wood's field-hospital flag on the other side of Meadow Brook, some distance down the pike, Ned hobbled over there, and we did not see him again for some weeks. Tom D—y was "missing." He turned up the next day, safe and sound.

KILLING HIM INSTANTLY.

But the one on the right, a wiry little cuss, bareheaded, and wearing a red shirt, lunged at me with his bayonet as the Lieutenant was falling. I grabbed the shaft of his bayonet with my left hand, and tried to close with him, intending to hammer him over the head with the empty pistol-barrel; but he jerked his musket loose, and shortening for a fierce thrust, struck at my neck. I was just in time to save my neck, and my bayonet entered my arm half way between the elbow and shoulder. It penetrated the deltoid muscle, and as I was springing backwards, I caught my heel against a stone or something, and fell over back. Just as I was falling I saw a bright bayonet and rifle-barrel thrust almost under my nose, with a blinding flash and report, and I came reeling, musket and all, on top of my legs as I fell. Intent on my original purpose, and thinking that he had only stumbled, I quickly disengaged my left hand, and with my right hand and knee, struck him over the left ear with my pistol-barrel, reaching for him with every muscle in my arm. This sagged him a little to one side, and then I saw him springing forward, "gravel" with his fingers, the convulsive grasping at the grass and dirt which a man dying of a gunshot wound will always do, and began to strain the pistol myself seeking for a drop-rope. But Old Yoder called out to me to "Rally on Kennedy's gun!" And so I ran and caught hold of Kennedy's drag-rope with the rest of the boys and abandoned our gun in order to save his.

We thought little about those things in such times, but as I look back at it now I am perfectly sure that Sergt. Aldrich saved my life; because that little red-shirted rebel would to a dead certainty have bayoneted me on the ground if Aldrich had not killed him as I was falling. In such a situation as that there is no time to surrender or to take prisoners. Fortunately such situations seldom happen, even in the fiercest battles; but when they do, it is always "either kill or die." It is idle to talk about "giving quarter" under such circumstances. A hand-to-hand fight between an infantryman with musket and bayonet and a Cannoneer with a revolver among the guns of a battery, must result in the death of one of them 99 times out of a thousand. This is by no means a cruel or inhuman warfare. It is merely a question of seconds. Both men are necessarily

After the victory was won, what efforts did Schofield make to have the order conveyed? He telegraphed Gen. Thomas as follows: "The enemy made a heavy and persistent attack with about two corps, commencing at 4 p. m. and lasting until after dark. He was repulsed at all points with heavy loss—probably 5,000 or 6,000. Your dispatch of this p. m. received. I had already given the orders you direct, and am now executing them." That is to say, in the same dispatch in which he informed Gen. Thomas of the attack and repulse of the enemy, he also informed him that he was continuing the movement in retreat. What an interesting

NASHVILLE CAMPAIGN.

The Part Taken by the Second Division, Fourth Corps.

BATTLE OF FRANKLIN.

After Opdycke's Charge They Had No Chance.

HAND-TO-HAND FIGHTING.

The Commanding General not Infected with the Enthusiasm.

BY JOHN K. SHELLINGER, HUNTSVILLE, TENN.



THE FIGHT AMONG THE GUNS.

WHEN the break in the line was restored, five brigades were crowded in the narrow space where two had been. Our lines behind the works were here six or eight ranks deep. A regular system of fighting was soon organized, although the officers and men of the different commands were intermingled in the greatest confusion. The men in the front rank did nothing but fire. They passed back the empty guns to those in the rear, who reloaded them. In rear of all was a fringe of men kneeling with guns at a ready. If a head appeared above the works but for an instant, down it would go with one or more bullets through it. In the desperate fighting, when only the breastworks separated the combatants, our men had greatly the advantage. The front rank, standing against the inside perpendicular face of the work, could stick the muzzle of a musket over the head-log, and elevating the breech, could send a plunging shot into the ditch outside, and only expose for an instant a part of the arm and the hand which discharged the piece. On account of the rounding outward face of the work on their side, the rebels could reach us with their fire only by exposing their bodies above the work. After Opdycke came forward and closed the gap in the line, they had not the shadow of a chance; but with desperate courage they persisted in their efforts till long after dark. Finally they gave it up and began to wave their hats and other signals elevated on the muzzles of their muskets above the breastworks, and called over to us to cease firing, and they would surrender. When in answer to their call our firing ceased, many came over and surrendered, but many others took advantage of the darkness and of the confusion occasioned by their friends coming over to escape back to their own lines. When the fighting ceased the 64th Ohio reformed its ranks to the left of the cotton-gin, in rear of the 104th Ohio. Our men came out of the crowd in front, where they had been fighting ever since they crossed the breastworks. One of them had in his hands the State flag of a regiment of the Twenty-third Corps, which he had picked up from the ground where it had been dropped, presumably when the regiment ran away. My company was made up of veterans, non-veterans whose time had expired, drafted men and substitutes; yet every man, save one, who had escaped the casualties of the battle, felt in line.

We did not know the fact at the time, but it came out later that a hired substitute had fled to the town and hid in a cellar. He remained there all night, was captured in the morning, was sent South to a rebel prison, was returning home after the war on the ill-fated Sultana, and found his final reward in the waters of